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THE SITUATION IN AFGHANISTAN AND ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR INTERNATIONAL PEACE AND SECURITY
REVIEW OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECLARATION ON THE STRENGTHENING OF INTERNATIONAL SECURITY

SECURITY COUNCIL
Forty-sixth year

Letter dated 15 May 1991 from the Permanent Representative of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit to you herewith the text of the statement by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics in connection with the third anniversary of the entry into force of the Geneva Agreements on Afghanistan.

I request you to have the text of this letter and its annex circulated as an official document of the General Assembly, under items 29 and 68 of the preliminary list, and also of the Security Council.

(Signed) Y. VORONTSOV

* A/46/50.

ANNEX

Statement by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics in connection with the third anniversary of the entry into force of the Geneva Agreements on Afghanistan

Three years ago, on 15 May, the return home of the Soviet military contingent from Afghanistan began in accordance with the Geneva Agreements. The withdrawal of Soviet troops, which was carried out exactly according to schedule and within the dates set, once again demonstrated the Soviet Union's conscientious and honest attitude with regard to the obligations that it has undertaken and its respect for international documents which it has signed.

The Government of the Republic of Afghanistan also acted in a similar way, not only strictly and unswervingly observing the articles and provisions of the agreement on non-interference signed with Pakistan, but also creating all the necessary conditions for ensuring the return of Afghan refugees to the country. All this was supplemented with flexible and constructive proposals designed to bring about national reconciliation and a political settlement of the problem in Afghanistan, which were put forward by both the Afghan leaders and the Soviet side as the guarantor of the Geneva Agreements. This created the necessary conditions for halting the fratricidal war and establishing peace in the long-suffering land of Afghanistan, which became feasible after April 1988, that is, after the conclusion of the Geneva Agreements.

Unfortunately, these agreements and the subsequent concrete, purposeful steps taken by Kabul and Moscow could not put an end to the bloodshed in Afghanistan, mainly because of the obstructionist policy of those forces which became involved in the Afghan conflict, first of all Pakistan. Although the withdrawal of Soviet troops was completed long ago, interference in the internal affairs of Afghanistan and the rendering of broad assistance to the armed Afghan opposition from the territory of Pakistan have not only not ceased, but are even tending to increase. The recent events connected with Khost, during which the Pakistani armed forces provided direct military support to the Afghan "Mujahidin", are an example of this.

In the time since the completion of the return home of the Soviet troops, much has been done through the active efforts of the Republic of Afghanistan, the USSR, Iran and the United States with considerable assistance from the United Nations in order to achieve a political settlement in Afghanistan; and, in particular, an international consensus has begun to emerge with regard to the basic principles for such a settlement. The Soviet Union and the Republic of Afghanistan believe that any settlement, which can be achieved only by the Afghans themselves, through an intra-Afghan dialogue, must be based on the rejection of the use of force, a reasonable and just compromise, consideration of the real situation and a balance of the interests of the opposing sides. The lack of an alternative to a political settlement is today in fact recognized by all, except the most extremist-minded faction of the "Peshawar

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Seven", which is becoming increasingly isolated from the clear-thinking faction of the Afghan political opposition.

In the situation that has come about, a sober approach free of all anger is more than ever necessary with regard to the Afghan problem. A double standard here is not only out of place, but also detrimental because it can only stall the positive progress which has recently been made in the course of contacts with various sides on the Afghan problem and impede a qualitative breakthrough towards an Afghan settlement. Such a breakthrough is completely possible provided that the Afghan opposition and those who support it renounce the imposition of ultimatums on the Government of the Republic of Afghanistan to withdraw from the political arena, which are combined with methods of exerting pressure through force.

Much in this regard depends on the countries which are supporting the opposition and whose views it must take into consideration. If they were able to induce the members of the opposition to halt the escalation of military activities and undertake a peaceful dialogue with the opposite side, the process to bring about a settlement would begin. As far as the Soviet Union is concerned, it will be prepared also in the future, in cooperation with the Afghan side, to do everything to ensure that a settlement is really brought about.

We hold sacred the memory of the soldiers and officers who were killed in the land of Afghanistan. The USSR Ministry for Foreign Affairs, together with other Soviet agencies, is making every effort to clear up the fate of the Soviet servicemen who are missing in Afghanistan and bring about the release from captivity of those who fell into the hands of the Afghan armed opposition. Their fate is a matter of profound concern for all Soviet people. We would like to hope that the entire world community will provide support and assistance in solving this humanitarian problem.